

REMARKS

In the above-identified Office Action, formal objections were raised as to Claims 7 and 9. In response, Applicants point out that both of those claims have now been cancelled.

Claims 10 and 12 were rejected as being anticipated by the cited Barnett patent, notwithstanding the allowance of those claims in the previous Office Action. By this response, however, independent Claim 10 has been amended to stress one aspect of its patentability over the Barnett patent.

Particularly, while Barnett fails to suggest several of the details of Claim 10, Applicants stress that amended Claim 10 requires that a silicon layer of about 30 μm is disposed directly on the electrode. Also, the terms of Claim 10 make it clear that it is electrode 27 which is referred to therein. That is, the requirement for the anti-reflection layer, the silicon layers, and the electrode, "provided from a light incident side," makes it clear that it is electrode 27 which is referred to in Claim 10. If Barnett is deemed to have an analogous electrode, it would have to be element 19 in Fig. 2 thereof, and it is clear from Col. 6 of Barnett that electrode 19 is significantly spaced from the silicon layer 16 by the inactive layer which is 200 to 500 μm thick (Col. 6, ln.36). Accordingly, Barnett does not suggest in any way the requirement for a 30 μm silicon layer disposed directly on an electrode.

This difference between Barnett and Applicants' claimed invention is significant in that a photoelectric conversion element is formed with a very thin profile, thus saving on material; and, in the case of a solar panel, providing an increased collecting efficiency for sunlight because of back reflection from the electrode.

For all these various reasons Applicants believe that pending Claims 10 and 12 are allowable, and the issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance is solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. K. Krause", written over a horizontal line.

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